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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the pedagogical dimension within the process of participatory budgeting in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, taking into consideration the local and regional culture, as well as the political milieu. The question is whether, in this social movement which involved around 400,000 people in 2001, signs can be identified that contribute to an education geared towards the political-pedagogical works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Paulo Freire, signaling the creation of the modern social contract and the search for another contract, with their respective pedagogical approaches. The paper proposes to begin a dialogue between Rousseau and Freire, who are situated in the extremes of the modern social contract. (Contains 15 notes and 21 references.) (Author/BT)

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TOWARDS A PEDAGOGY OF A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT:
Lessons from Participatory Budgeting in the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)

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***Summary**: The paper[2] analyzes the pedagogical dimension within the process of Participatory Budgeting in the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), taking into consideration the local and regional culture as well as the political milieu. The question is whether in this social movement which involved around 400,000 people in 2001, there can be identified signs that contribute for an education geared towards the production of a new social contract. The background of the discussion are the political-pedagogical works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Paulo Freire, signalizing the creation of the modern social contract and the search for another contract, with their respective pedagogical approaches.*

Introduction

It is quite difficult to deliver what has been promised in the title, both for the scope of the field, with many aspects to explore, as well as for the expectations that may be generated. This broad

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[2] This paper is a parcial report of the research project entitled "Pedagogy of a new social contract based on the participatory budgeting in the State of Rio Grande do Sul", supported by FAPERGS (Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul) and CNPq (Conselho Nacional de Pesquisa).

scope, however, is intentional and may even be inevitable for my purpose. I was looking for a kind of key to understand the multiple changes and crises we live in present-day society and the concept of social contract seemed to be adequate for comprehending the relations between persons, the configuration of the institutional apparatus, the ways of exercising power, among other aspects that refer to human life in society and on our planet. Furthermore, the idea of a social contract is intrinsically associated with the discussion which at this moment takes place about modernity and post-modernity, a theme that takes us to the question about the continuities and discontinuities we are experiencing and the meanings we attribute to either one.

At the same time, a quick look at everything that at this moment is being discussed about the new contractualism would recommend to leave the concept of social contract aside, for social and political scientists. This difficulty, however, should not be understood as a prohibition, but as an alert that it is necessary to be cautious and willing to learn with specialists from other fields. In this sense, the problem of this study is not so different from others in education. We construct our field necessarily by borrowing from other areas where – so it is said, not always incorrectly – we lack expertise: knowledge of epistemology, anthropology, psychology, just to mention a few, is fundamental to account for what learning and teaching is or should be. What makes things worse is that all this knowledge is needed at the same time because of the complexity of the educational practice. The alternative between the silence of one who does not speak because he does not know[3] and one who speaks dilettantly of everything without worrying that others may know more and better, is to engage in a serious and honest dialogue with different areas and forms of knowing.

It is in this spirit that I am using the concept of social contract. My intention in this study is to understand the interconnections of the discussion regarding the social contract with education, perhaps identifying a place or movement where to establish a new dialogue. It should also be noted

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[3] This means the reduction of educational knowledge to the level of applicability, as we often see it. One takes a given theory or author (sociologist, philosopher, etc.) and then analyzes the implications for education. This, although obviously important, is not sufficient. Education, by its nature, requires the crossing of frontiers, epistemological and others, with all the risk this entails.

that the problems which originated the Participatory Budgeting are not primarily pedagogical ones. Pedagogy comes as a dialogue partner because education is part of life, and both the social contract as the public budget have to do with the quality of life.

If I had to sum up the perspective of this study, I would say that it is political-pedagogical. Political in the broadest and original sense referring to life in the *polis*, and pedagogical in the sense in which one is and makes him/herself human in one or another way. It is a first approach to a theme, which will have to be extended in various dimensions and directions. Initially I analyze what some authors are denominating as the crisis of the modern social contract; then I look at the social contract as being (also) a pedagogical problem, for this purpose engaging briefly Rousseau and Freire; at the end, I try to identify some political-pedagogical practices within the Participatory Budgeting which seem to be pointing towards what might be another social contract.

The crisis of the social contract

The question about the need of organization and regulation among individuals emerges as the predefined relations in a world structured according to a theocentrical conception begin to erode. In this sense, the social contract is a product of modernity.[4] Among the classical authors that contribute to the elaboration of the social contract are Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, each of them identified, in his own way, with the search for another way of being and living in a world that wasn't anymore the same. Boaventura de Sousa Santos says that the social contract is "the founding metaphor of the social and political rationality of western modernity."(1999, p. 34)

It seems that today we experience again very similar questions to those that originated this social contract and which challenge us to search for new answers. A symptom of this fact is the recurrent use of the expression "new social contract". One has seldom a specific content for what is

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[4] Another reading suggests that the social contract originates with society itself. "As mythically as expected, the social contract signalizes the beginning of societies. Due to these or those necessities, some men decide, some day, to live together and associate; since then we do not know how to live without the others. When, how and why this contract was signed – or not – we do not know and, for sure, we never will. It does not matter." (Serres, 1991, p. 57)

qualified as "new" and this does not seem to be a basic issue. What seems to be at stake is the denouncement that a given contract does not meet the conditions of present-day society and that it is necessary to look for alternatives. It is also not, initially, an academic problem, but a theme that originates from evidences of daily life which, on their turn, challenge the academy.

The most dramatic signal of this reality is the emergency of what Xabier Gorostiaga calls the "champagne cup civilization", with figures like these: the richest 20% of the world population consume 86% of all products and services, while the poorest 20% consume only 1.3%; the United States of America, with 5% of the world population utilizes 25% of the world's resources, which means that the planet would not support the universalization of the "American way of life"; of the 4.4 billion inhabitants of developing countries, approximately 60% do not have access to clean water, 25% do not have adequate housing and 20% do not have access to any modern health service. (Gorostiaga). What makes the situation still more tragic is that, in the expression of Ulrich Beck, the "new rich do not need anymore the new poor."(Beck, 1998, p. 23). This means that it is almost impossible, according to him, to organize a comparison between them, since there is no common space for identifications within which the conflict could be discussed and eventually regulated.

Latin America, as we know, is a place where the differences from the bottom to the top of the cup are among the largest. Data from the World Bank show that from 1982 to 1993 the total number of persons living in poverty in Latin America increased from 78 to 150 million. This figure reached 200 million in the year 2000. (Baquero). While writing this text, I listen to the news about the crisis in Argentina where the population revolted against the economic measures to please the world financial system, but where the remedies to cure the "illness" seem to be always more difficult to swallow.

What king social contract is it that legitimates the *apartheid* within a country and among them? Is it indeed still possible to refer to a social contract? The following comment by Boaventura de Sousa Santos sums up the problem:

> On the level of presuppositions the general value regime does not seem to resist the growing

> fragmentation of society, divided into multiple *apartheids*, polarized along the economical, social, political and cultural axes. Not only does the fight for the common good loose its meaning, but also the fight for alternative definitions of the common good. It seems that the general will has been transformed into an absurd proposition. In these conditions some authors refer even to the end of society (1999, p. 41)

Let us now look at some ideas about the social contract and respectively the search for what might be the "newness". The criteria in this search is a direct reference to the social contract, in an initial attempt to construct a map of the discussion:

1. *A natural contract*: The modern social contract, according to many analyses, has deepened and above all legitimized the separation between society and history on one side, and nature on the other side. One who calls attention to this problem in a challenging way is Michel Serres in his *Natural Contract*:

> The philosophers of modern natural law have sometimes associated our origin to a social contract which, at least virtually, we would have established among us in order to enter in the collective which made us the human beings we are. Strangely mute about the world, this contract, they say, made us leave the state of nature to form society. Since the pact, everything happens as if the group that signed it, by saying goodbye to the world, would not be rooted anymore in anything but in history. (Serres, 19991, p. 47)

The argument of Michel Serres is that the modern social contract is not sufficient and needs to be complemented by the "natural contract". As he puts it, both the common man and the one who governs have forgotten nature. Our species, the human, has dominated the planet and taken over its resources. An implication of this is the predominance of short time memory and solutions. Therefore, together with the social contract, we should be thinking of "a natural contract of symbiosis and reciprocity" (p. 51) which would allow us to overcome our parasitical vision, i.e., a relation of one who only takes from a host who gives everything but who may be coming to his/her limits.

Modernity and its merely social contract, characterized as negligence (the opposite of religion), has destroyed or lost all ties that bound human beings to the world. Therefore, concludes Serres, the necessity to recuperate the two laws, which would sustain this new kind of contract. The first one requires that we love one another, as much those who are near us as the whole of humanity. The second law asks that we love the world, understood as the local space (the ground we walk on, the air we breathe, the fruits we eat...) as well as the whole Earth. In summary, the contractual duties would pass through "loving our two fathers, the natural and the human, the soil and the neighbor; loving humanity, our human mother and our natural mother, the Earth." (p. 62)

Serres' proposition finds echo in a series of writings of which I mention just a few. Leonardo Boff understands that care – the opposite of the negligence denounced by Serres – is the central point for a new ethics capable of reestablishing the broken ties of men among themselves and with the world.[5] Francisco Gutierrez (1999) and Moacir Gadotti (2000) propose, respectively, an echopedagogy and a pedagogy of the Earth.

2. *A world social contract:* Another argument is based on the presupposition that the present social contract is not efficient to regulate life among different people in a globalized world. In a reality in which the modern unity between the national State and the national society is torn apart[6], there is the need for new means of regulating the relations among peoples on the planet.

Of special interest for the discussion of the social contract is the idea that today's globalization signalizes a passage, being situated between the political, economical and social modernity and a post-modernity which is not yet defined.[7] More then this, what is nominated as

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[5] "What matters is to construct a new *ethos* which allows a new sociability between humans and other beings of the biotic, planetary and cosmic community; which promotes a new enchantment in face of the majesty of the universe and the complexity of the relations that sustain all and each one of the beings." (Boff, 1999, p. 27)

[6] This argument is elaborated by Ulrich Beck, who explains how in this second modernity there is a new configuration of power relations, between national units on one side and transnational identities, actors and processes on the other. (Beck, 1998, p. 46)

[7] See Carlos Alberto Torres, *Democracia, educação e multiculturalismo*, in which the author takes over this argument from Douglas Kellner. Ulrich Beck (1998), on his turn, builds his idea of

post-modernity corresponds to a manyfold social construction which is at the center of the debate between conflicting forces. In other words, they are conflicting narratives about reality and about the destiny of the world we live in.

For Ricardo Petrella the present globalization is the narrative of the world and of society which became hegemonic since the seventies due to the conjunction of various factors: a) the acceleration of the finantiarization (techno-scientification and dematerialization) of the economy due to the development of information and communication technologies; b) the crisis of saturation of western economy which favored and legitimized the new "Holy Trinity" based on the processes of liberalization, deregulation and privatization; c) the loss of credibility of the militarized socialism which was not regarded anymore as a desirable alternative for the western market capitalism; d) a new colonialism that opens up the whole world for the western capitalism, specially for North America.

The narrative of an alternative world social contract would therefore have to face the following challenges: to get rid of today's great narrative that believes – and makes believe – that it is the heir of the marriage of the scientific rand technological revolution, which would guarantee automatic legitimacy; to develop a science and a technology that would serve the well-being of the collectivity; to democratize the access to the productivity gains, today concentrated in the hands of the financial capital; to overcome the tendency of transforming the person in "human resource"[8]; to denounce the total mercantilization, from knowledge to life itself; to recuperate the credibility of politics.

The core idea of this proposal of social contract is the development of a conscience that the problems of today's society have an international dimension. An example of this is the availability

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globalization in terms of first and second modernity.

[8] "The worst thing for a "human resource" is to become a 'resource' of obsolete competencies and of not being 're-ciclable' at the right time, at the right place, for the right work (be it for being too old, be it because the recycling is too expensive for the employer, be it for other reasons...)" (Petrella)

and the use of water, a subject very dear to the above-cited Petrella. In spite of the fact that around 2 billion people today do not have access to this basic resource, the leaders of developed countries keep promoting a politics of privatization of water services to the population. Besides, local or even regional solutions will be insufficient in the long run for dealing with this problem, as with most great problems regarding quality of life, if not simply survival.

4. *A new political contract*: Tarso Genro, mayor of Porto Alegre (the capital city of Rio Grande do Sul), stresses the political dimension of the new social contract. For him, the idea of a new social contract starts from the presupposition that the present State and its traditional political representation system is not anymore adequate for mediating between the conflicts in the context of economic globalization, and within the new pattern of production originated through the modern scientific and technological development. "Since 200 years, he says, we did not create new institutions, in spite of the profound changes that occurred in this period." (p. 34)

He argues for the necessity to create a "new non state public space" which would be the equivalent to a "new political contract" through which the Executive would be open to the decisions of another sphere, with broad public participation. It would correspond to a radically democratic State, where besides the already existing decision making apparatus, originated through the political representation, there would be another one originated in a new public space and which would allow the permanent and direct presence of the various organizations of civil society. "The political representation will be permanently re-legitimized under democratic pressure and will decide with a greater degree of authenticity, based on knowledge of the majority's social aspirations."(Genro, 1999, p. 62).

If Tarso Genro proposes that the experience of the Participatory Budgeting is in the process of wearing out, it is because he believes in its superation through more permanent and democratized mechanisms of political participation[9]. This participation would not be restricted to the process of budgeting, but would comprehend other dimensions of public life, finally bringing about the control

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[9] See R. Ricci, *Do Orçamento Participativo à Reforma do Estado.*

of the State by a society in permanent movement.

5. *A more comprehensive social contract*: Boaventura de Sousa Santos understands that the modern social contract is not capable of responding to the dynamics of the exclusion-inclusion process of today, leaving at the fringes of contractuality great part of the world population, in a situation in which one passes directly from pre-contractualism, where even for the excluded there was a possibility of inclusion, to post-contractualism, where this possibility is always more remote.

For this Portuguese sociologist the solution is not to discard the idea of social contract. On the contrary, another social contract would be the ultimate requirement for the reconfiguration and reconstruction of the time-space of democratic participation and deliberation. It would be a contract quite different from the modern one, as he summarizes in a paragraph which is worth reproducing for the intensity and variety of colors in which it is pictured:

> It is, first of all, a much more inclusive contract because it has to comprehend not only persons and social groups, but also nature. Second, it is more conflictual because inclusion happens as much based on criteria of equality as of difference. Third, since the final purpose of the contract is to reconstruct the time-space of democratic deliberation, then, contrary to what has succeeded in the modern social contract, this one can not be confined to the national state time-space and has to include equally the local, regional and global time-space. Finally, the new social contract is not based on rigid distinctions between State and civil society, between economy, politics and culture, between public and private. The democratic deliberation, while a cosmopolitan requirement, does not have a specific headquarter, neither a specific institutional materiality. (1999, p. 60)

In this exercise it is possible to see above all how the theme of the social contract comprehends the great questions of our time, from our relationship with nature to our insertion in the job market. Therefore it also has such importance for education, since in the pedagogical practice all these questions of life and society come together. The next step will be to bring this discussion explicitly into the pedagogical arena.

The social contract as a pedagogical problem

At least since Plato is the understanding of education strongly related with politics, so much that Rousseau will refer to the *Republic* as the best treaty of education ever written. "Should you intend to have an idea of public education, then read Plato's *Republic*. It is not a political writing, as think those who judge books only by their title: it is the most beautiful treaty on education ever written." (Rousseau, 1995, p. 12). But from this point on there are important differences of how one understands this relation. For some, education is an extension of the political project, a more or less natural consequence of the relations of power.[10] F. Cabral Pinto, on the other hand, argues that Rousseau inverts this instrumental relation, making politics subordinated to the project of construction of the modern, universal ideal of man[11]. There may be, it seems, a less linear interpenetration, not simply of cause-effect, between these two spheres of the constitution of the citizen and the human being. Anyway, this relation stands as a background issue for the pedagogical understanding of the social contract.

The purpose, in this part of the study, is to begin a dialogue between two authors who are situated in the extremes of the modern social contract. Rousseau works out his ideas in a time when the today's controversial social contract is in the process of elaboration and Paulo Freire is equally situated in a time of "paradigmatic transition" (Boaventura de Sousa Santos).[12] The intention is to identify some references for the pedagogical articulation of this social contract, respectively of the search for its superation.

The first issue is that for both authors the lines between politics and education are very thin.

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[10] "For the classical authors, the question of education was never separated from the question of power. *Paideia*, pedagogy and politics always went hand in hand. Education – since Plato and Aristoteles to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Dewey and Paulo Freire, to mention just a few – has been considered an extension of the political project." (Torres, 2001, p. 252)

[11] See F. Cabral Pinto, *A construção do homem no projecto da modernidade*, p. 123.

[12] This idea has been developed in *Pedagogy in the encounter of times* (Streck, 2001), especially in the first chapter, where there is an analysis of Paulo Freire's ideas in terms of three founding metaphors in his pedagogy: the line, the rupture and the trama.

Rousseau elaborates his *Social Contract* together with the *Emile*, by which he seems to convey that it is impossible to think of the "Bildung"of man, without thinking society itself, a permanent tension which he describes with these words: "It is necessary to study society through men, and men through society; whoever wants to treat separately politics and morals will not understand anything from either one or another." (1995, p. 309)

On the other side, we know very well Paulo Freire's argument that education does not only have a political dimension, but that education is always and necessarily political. We become men and women in society, within given political projects which, although not being able to determine us, necessarily condition what and how we are. Freedom and its respective commitment take place within history where the limit-situations also constitute possibilities. In Rousseau as in Freire, therefore, the argument of an instrumentalization of education by politics, or vice-versa, does not hold.

A second reason why the dialogue between these two authors is so challenging is because they reveal a tremendous sensibility for the moments lived by their respective societies. A couple of decades before the French Revolution, Rousseau wrote prophetically: "You trust the present order of society without realizing that this order is subject to inevitable revolutions and that it is impossible to prevent or foresee what may happen to our children. (....) We are near the state of crisis and of the century of revolutions."(1995, p. 248). He was announcing that the great European monarchies were in inevitable decline.

Two centuries later, in the midst of the social (student, women, popular, etc.) movements of the end of the 60's Paulo Freire opened his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* with words that revealed the same sensibility for the great changes that were taking place: "Once again men, challenged by the dramaticity of the present hour, propose themselves as a problem. They discover that they know little about themselves, about their 'place in cosmos', and are anxious to know more." (Freire, 1981, p. 29) The basic problem is humanization, which implies the search for new forms of living in society.

Emile, Rousseau's imaginary pupil, incarnates the ideal citizen to live within the social

contract he proposes. The way *Emile* is presented, as a pedagogical novel, indicates that Rousseau is not worried about describing society as it is in order to, afterwards, insert Emile in it. According to Ulhôa (1996, p. 13), "it is precisely this radical rejection of any concession to the so called political realism which underlies, for Rousseau, the possibility of utopia." This utopia is founded on his radical optimism in relation to human nature and on his not less radical pessimism in relation to society. "Man is born free, and finds himself everywhere in chains." (1983, p. 13) This is the underlying question of the social contract and for which he intends to present a solution.

Therefore Emile is brought up alone and the first and major concern for the tutor is not to interfere in his natural development. This, however, does not mean that Emile's destiny is to live, like Robinson Crusoe, alone on an island. The ideal society, which Rousseau pictures, is that one where citizens are able to participate directly in the life of the community. The ideal of democracy reveals itself in the simplicity of farmers discussing matters of the State in the shadow of an oak tree. (1983, p. 117) Contrary to Locke, for whom freedom is based on the individual right to property, for Rousseau freedom, along with equality, has a communitary dimension.[13]

What makes Rousseau still more interesting for today is that he, as pointed out by Boaventura de Sousa Santos, criticizes the lights from the lights themselves.[14] Emile is educated to base his conduct on reason, to be autonomous and not to depend on others' opinions. Sophia, Emile's female companion, although capable of reason, has the exercise of this capacity limited due to his believe

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[13] "The paradigm of modernity is very rich and complex, equally susceptible to profound variations and to contradictory developments. It is based on two pillars, one of regulation and one of emancipation, each pillar constituted by three principles or logics. The pillar of regulation is constituted by the principle of the State, formulated essentially by Hobbes, by the principle of the market, developed above all by Locke and by Adam Smith, and by the principle of community, which dominates all political theory of Rousseau." (Santos, 2000, p. 50). Raul Pont, on his turn, sees in Rousseau the exponent of the liberal "igualitarian"current, the same as Locke represents for the "property" current. (Pont, in: Fischer at al, 2000, p. 29).

[14] Rousseau, therefore, would express better than anyone else the tension between regulation and emancipation, the two principles that lie at the origin of modernity. (Cf. Santos, 2000, p. 129). This is also the opinion of Carlota Boto, for whom "Rousseau, a voyage companion of the iluminist movement, could not be confounded with it." (Boto, 1996, p. 26)

that the feminine nature is not made for such things. In this sense, Rousseau fits perfectly within the caricature of the "modern" way of thinking. At the same time, however, he expresses his disagreement with a cold rationality, separated from feelings and from corporeity. (1985, p. 442) In the same direction goes his criticism of faith in modern science as capable of producing more happiness for men and women. (See "Discourse on the sciences and the arts", in: Rousseau, 1983, p. 376).

I have tried to point out some arguments for the importance of a fresh reading of Rousseau in order to reconstruct our political-pedagogical perspective. In what follows I will mention aspects where the dialogue with Freire may be fruitful for advancing towards a pedagogy of another social contract. After all, as argued in this paper, the crisis of the social contract has to do with the crisis of its pedagogy, and vice-versa.

I see basically two places from where to begin the approximation. The first one is that Freire's pupil would be never educated in isolation for then to be integrated to society. Education is, for Freire, always an intersubjective process and nature itself is not something ready, outside of ourselves. The second is that the social contract is not founded on the presupposition of a natural human goodness, but is an injunction derived from the interpelative otherness of the oppressed or excluded.

Mainly due to the Rogerian influence in the 70's, Paulo Freire tried very soon to make explicit that education is always directive. Being intrinsically political, education is always directed according to a given project of society and mixed with power relations. The educator is not a facilitator of learning, but he understands him/herself as a witness in the process of knowing. He/she is someone who makes and remakes in front of his/her students and with them the roads of knowledge.

In this regard, Freire shares with Rousseau the idea that inequalities are not natural, but historically produced. The two centuries that separate them, however, left their marks, and Freire incorporates, besides the results of the Revolution that Rousseau was foreseeing, the inheritance of

marxism, of existentialism, of the critical theories, among others. From this originates the understanding that the new will not come from an Emile protected from a corrupt society, but from those who have their citizenship and their humanity denied.[15] The Freirean historical subject does not exist as an *a priori*, but is constituted in the multiple movements towards the conquest of the right to be more fully human.

Political-pedagogical practices within the Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting should not be seen as a panacea for social problems, especially in the so-called emerging countries. It is also far from being a "pure" practice, immune to the vices of a clientelistic and demagogical political culture. Nevertheless, there are aspects or dynamics within this process which can be seen as a signal of the creation of something new and it is those which we will bring into focus, having in mind the possibility of a pedagogical practice as part of another social contract.

A first observation refers to the possibility, as Paulo Freire puts it, to reinvent power. Through Participatory Budgeting there is potentially the alternative of creating a new public sphere in which the traditional representative democracy is integrated with practices of direct democracy. This reinvention of power is of utmost importance given the many learnings from history that simply taking over power does not imply changes, many times in spite of good intentions. Basic in this process is the possibility of the citizen to say his/her word in public and the conquest of the right to be listened to by his co-citizens and by those who govern. "In a well constituted *polis*, says Rousseau, everybody runs to the assemblies." (1983, p. 107) It seems that the fact that a *polis* opens spaces for public manifestation of public matters is one reason for the participation of thousands of

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[15] Enrique Dussel sees in the Freirean pedagogy the emergency of anti-Emilio: "When Rousseau defined the subject of modern pedagogy, he found him in *Emile*, young, male, solipsist, without neither parents nor tradition, a bourgeoise *curriculum* to form the techno-industrial spirit which should oppose itself to the *ancien régime*. Freire, on the contrary, in his transmodern pedagogy of liberation, takes as reference a community of oppressed victims, immersed in a popular culture, with traditions, in spite of being illiterate, miserable...'the wretched of the earth'." (Dussel, 2000, p. 441)

citizens in Participatory Budgeting. Going back to Rousseau, participation can be regarded as a sign of health of the *polis*.

A second observation regards the creation of an educative city, *mutatis mutandi*, of a society where all learn and teach about the world, how it is and how it should be. In the assemblies of the Participatory Budgeting there take place innumerous learnings about local and regional reality, there is the confrontation of values (for example, in the decision between building a road or a school or a hospital), one learns about the social and economic situations of other regions and together with the dispute for the always scarce resources the are also many gestures of solidarity. The challenge seems to be how to make the pedagogical dimension of the Participatory Budgeting more explicit, not in the sense of turning it into a "school", but in the sense of being able to explore positively the many pedagogical possibilities in the process. For instance: How can Participatory Budgeting help to overcome antidialogical practices that impregnate the political and communitarian culture and which tend to persist in this new political practice? What methodologies could favor a more effective participation of all citizens? How to create dynamics of systematization which are more transparent? How to pay attention to technical aspects that interfere with the communication in a meeting (space, sound equipment, etc.)?

Participatory Budgeting can also be the place for the learning of an ethics of solidarity or of care, without which there will be no social contract, neither old nor new. The social ties, as Rousseau already observed, are not only broken by not obeying the established rules, but are also broken in the heart. (Rousseau, 1983, p. 118). In this sense, solidarity is mainly another way of being in the world, with others, of being in and with life. A Colombian educator and theologian (Mario Peresson) defines solidarity as tenderness which is both efficient and collective. This idea has a special appeal for various reasons: a) it recuperates the concept of tenderness (*ternura* in Portuguese and Spanish), a precious idea in Latin-American thinking, from José Martí, to Che Guevara and to Luis Carlos Restrepo; b) it brings human relations to the level of social efficacy, of public policies; it proposes that amorosity and tenderness are not restricted to the intimacy of private life, but have to do with the political, the collective life. In Participatory Budgeting this can be confirmed in as far as the

meetings are also a social and communitarian event, where one meets and makes friends; one has a "chimarrão" (mate tea) with neighbors and acquaintances of other places; where over a glass of beer one discusses priorities and, by doing this, the social ties are strengthened or re-established.

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